

Message Text

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USDA FROM AGATT FOR FAS
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TAGS: EAGR IN
SUBJECT: INDIA FOODGRAIN PRODUCTION, 1977-78

1. UNION MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE BARNALA, WHILE TESTIFYING IN THE
LOWER HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT ON THE AGRICULTURE MINISTRY BUDGET, ANNOUNCED

THAT FOODGRAIN PRODUCTION FOR 1977-78 ENDING JUNE 30 WILL REACH A
RECORD 125 MILLION METRIC TONS. THE FIGURE IS BASED ON REPORTS FROM
THE STATES AND WOULD EXCEED THE PREVIOUS RECORD OF 121 ESTABLISHED IN
1975-76 BY 4 MILLION TONS. RICE AT 50 MILLION TONS AND WHEAT AT
AROUND 31 TO 31.5 MILLION TONS WOULD BE PRODUCTION RECORDS FOR THESE
TWO CEREAL GRAINS. SORGHUM PRODUCTION IS ALSO EXPECTED TO REACH A
NEW RECORD. AMONG COMMERCIAL CROPS, SUGARCANE, AND TEA ARE ALSO
EXPECTED TO REACH ALL TIME HIGH LEVELS OF OUTPUT. IN VIEW OF THE
ACHIEVEMENTS, MR. BARNALA PREDICTED OVERALL GROWTH IN
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN 1977-78 WOULD BE 10 TO 12 PERCENT -
THE HIGHEST SO FAR IN ANY YEAR.

2. THE MINISTER STATED THAT AN ADDITIONAL IRRIGATION POTENTIAL OF 2.8
MILLION HECTARES HAD BEEN CREATED AND THAT IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS
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PAGE 02 NEW DE 06570 270637Z

OF THE SIXTH PLAN 17 MILLION MORE HECTARES WOULD COME UNDER
IRRIGATION OF WHICH 8 MILLION WOULD BE UNDER MAJOR AND MINOR SCHEMES.
HE OBSERVED THAT IF THE PRESENT TEMPO OF BRINGING ADDITIONAL LAND
UNDER IRRIGATION IS MAINTAINED, THE ENTIRE IRRIGABLE POTENTIAL OF
107 MILLION HECTARES COULD BE REACHED BY THE END OF THE CENTURY.
COMMENT: THE MINISTER MADE PASSING REFERENCE TO FAVORABLE WEATHER IN
HIS PRESENTATION. THE 1977 SUMMER MONSOON COMPARED FAVORABLY WITH

THE ONE IN 1975 WHEN THE PREVIOUS FOOD GRAIN PRODUCTION RECORD WAS
ACHIEVED. WINTER TEMPERATURES AND RAINS WERE EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD.
LOSSES FROM CYCLONES, HAIL, AND DROUGHT WERE LOCALIZED AND
MINIMAL. OFFTAKE OF FERTILIZER AT 4.2 MILLION METRIC TONS OF NPK WAS
UP ABOUT 24 PERCENT OVER 1976-77. AMPLE SUPPLIES OF IRRIGATION
WATER AND POWER WERE ALSO CONTRIBUTORY FACOTRS AS WAS THE ABSENCE
OF SERIOUS PLANT DISEASE OR PEST INFESTATION. THE BOUNTIFUL FOOD-
GRAIN OUTPUT WILL MEAN THAT STOCKS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE AT LEAST
20 MILLION METRIC TONS BY THE END OF THE AGRICULTURAL YEAR JUNE 30,
1978 WHICH WILL BE HIGHLY COMFORTABLE POSITION FOR THE COUNTRY
TO BE IN AS THE NATION'S FARMERS AWAIT THE ONSET OF THE 1978 SUMMER
MONSOON AND THE RESULTS NEXT FALL OF THEIR SUMMER CROP PLANTINGS.
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